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### WHOOPING CRANES WIN

## Beltway Plan Altered To Spare Rare Birds

The Maryland State Roads Commission has changed the route for the proposed Outer Beltway in order to protect the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, with its rare whooping cranes.

Officials at the center had complained to the state that the original route would cause various kinds of pollution which would be detrimental to the birds at the refuge.

Following an investigation, the commission ordered the route moved about a mile to the south of the center's two lakes.

The facility, which is working for the preservation of several species of endangered wild birds, including the whoopers, is located along the Patuxent River north of Bowie.

As of the last count made in January, there are only 56 of the cranes living in wild state, spending the winter in Texas and the summer in northern Canada.

In 1941, the total of whoopers in the world had decreased to 25. The number has since increased to about 80, with more than 20 at the center.

The birds have come from eggs taken from nests in Canada and hatched at the Patuxent facility. When they mature, the birds will be re-with more than 20 at the center in an attempt to re-establish the species.